Making Excellence Inclusive: A UCR Diversity Certificate Program

“Branding UCR as an Employer of Choice”

Jim Carpenter
Diana Marroquin
Rhesha Norris
Facilitator: Brittnee Meitzenheimer

May 20, 2016
The University of California Riverside is known for being the most diverse of all the UC’s. In this paper we will explore Branding UCR as an Employer of Choice. We have broken this down into three different parts. First, creating a UCR Diversity Informational Community website listing culturally significant locations in and surrounding Riverside County, also sections that contain information added by the UC Riverside staff & faculty. This website would list contact information and would directly link staff and faculty to a number of community resources. Second, making it mandatory for all new hires (both staff and faculty alike) to complete a Diversity Workshop within their first year of employment. Finally, we will discuss how each unit, department, and office should have a Diversity Ambassador responsible for communicating information regarding events, news, changes in policy, forums on diversity, etc. to all UCR employees in their unit. This would enable all staff and faculty to have a representative in their unit, department or office that they could approach regarding anything related to the topic of diversity.

It is our goal to outline how each of these areas could enrich UCR and brand it as an employer of choice to prospective applicants. Given that UCR is already the most diverse of the UC’s we feel that incorporating our suggestions would add to its appeal. Having a Diversity Informational Community webpage, making diversity workshops mandatory, and having Diversity Ambassadors in each office would demonstrate that the University of California Riverside takes the topic of Diversity very seriously and that we at UCR are doing everything possible to live up to its name.

Currently, UCR does offer a Diversity Certificate Program to all employees. However, the program is optional rather than mandatory. This is an intense six-month long program which includes workshops, discussion sessions, outside readings, capstone projects, and a final project presentation. The program is in its eighth year and has had an incredible success rate. We suggest creating a program that condenses this certificate program into perhaps a one or two month long workshop that meets weekly to navigate through the topic of diversity. The program could be offered year around as we feel it would be useful for all UCR employees to be educated on the topic of diversity, understanding it and approaching it in an educated way.

Currently UCR does not offer mandatory Diversity Awareness training. We feel that this type of training is just as important as the Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Prevention training and the Cybersecurity Awareness Training courses required of all employees. Educating its employees in the area of Diversity should be held in the same regard as the previously mentioned trainings required of all UCR employees. Similarly, UCR has Health and Wellness Ambassadors campus wide, we believe Diversity Ambassadors are just as important and absolutely necessary in each department, office and unit across campus. UCR would also benefit from having an informational community page, this would serve as a resource for all employees new to the area that may be looking for a place of worship, community or cultural event to attend or participate in.
**Diversity Ambassador**

Each unit, department, and office on campus should have a Diversity Ambassador. The person assigned to this position would be responsible for communicating information regarding events, news, changes or implementations of new campus wide policies, etc. to other members of the staff in that unit. For example, the Diversity Ambassador would regularly visit the Diversity @ UCR Homepage and communicate any pertinent information to all staff via weekly emails. The Staff Resources tab contains very important information in the areas of career development, education and training, mentoring, professional development and current staff openings. Facts and official statistics can also be found on this site containing important information for anyone interested in working for a university as diverse as UCR. In addition to this type of data the Diversity Ambassador would also be responsible for alerting staff to diversity events both on campus and within the community.

When completing an online application of employment with UCR it would be nice to see a few sentences explaining that UCR has Diversity Ambassadors across campus in each unit, department, and office detailing what their responsibilities are. This would be a similar disclaimer to the one regarding the University of California Riverside Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action Policy. In addition to including a disclaimer to what the responsibilities of the Diversity Ambassador include, there would also be a link displayed directing all potential employees to our Diversity @ UCR Homepage. By just clicking on the link all potential employees would be able to see our Policies and Guidelines, Diversity Programs, Student Resources, Faculty Resources, Complaint Resolution, Campus Resources, External Agencies, and Reports and Statistics.

**Mandatory Diversity Trainings for All Employees**

In making diversity a core value, the University of California Riverside recognizes that its campus flourishes only when all students, faculty, staff have a community in which to grow and thrive. The University’s access and diversity goals, value and practices are fully interconnected, and the Office Diversity.ucr.edu is comprised of offices that work together and in collaboration with faculty, staff, students and administrators to educate and serve all members of the University community. Here at UC Riverside we require, through Diversity.ucr.edu and the campus Diversity Ambassador that all new hires faculty and staff take a diversity workshop that must be completed within the first year of their employment Educational Achievement, promotes, integrates and transfers equity and diversity principles to nature human resources and advance the mission of the University of California Riverside.

In terms of risks, we feel that while staff would be open to enrolling in a mandatory Diversity Awareness training upon hire we would be met with resistance from faculty. It is our experience that very few, if any, faculty members like to be told what to do. Add in the word “mandatory” and you have a recipe for disaster! The trick would be presenting the training to
them in a non-aggressive way. Making it appealing to them, perhaps offering them university service credit upon completion of the training would make it more appealing.

The following list touches upon the benefits our implementations would bring to UCR:
* provide leadership and consultation to develop and implement equity and diversity strategies throughout the campus
* promoting the use of standardized and proactive human resources processors
* nurturing human resources through the effective use of continuous improvement principles
* establishing collaborative partnerships with School/Colleges and Divisions

We define “diversity” in the broadest sense of the word. Our university community is strengthened by our representing different races, religions, ethnicities, economic backgrounds, geographic origins, sexualities, and beliefs.

We feel the best way to measure the success of our suggested implementations would be to have all employees complete a diversity survey upon their first day of employment (this could be included with their employment paperwork packet). Upon completion of their diversity training they would be given the same survey. We would then compare the answers to measure the effectiveness of the program and its success rate.

_Diversity Informational Community Webpage_

**Purpose:** UC Riverside is a leader for diverse Universities across the nation. The efforts to maintain this distinction has become a mission of UC Riverside, and the results are far reaching and impactful throughout the campus community. Becoming an employer of choice is another aspect of the diversity spectrum, and the goal is to attract high-quality candidates who upon hire will enter an environment that is welcoming and inclusive of various beliefs, rather than a workplace that censors religious beliefs, culture or practices.

**Content:** Through our collaborative efforts, we would like to see that inclusive environment supplemented by a forum of like-minded individuals. This forum would be in the form of a website, and its growth would be fostered by members of the UCR family. Diversity.ucr.edu will be place for individuals to learn about the cultures that are around them right on campus. Inspiring articles, personal stories, and regular updates throughout the year will allow employees with interest to engage members of the community on a level not often seen in a professional environment. A compilation of houses of worship, as well as cultural and religious events occurring in the area will provide a sense of community from the first day of hire and will remain for as long as you want to learn and/or be involved.

Diversity takes on many forms, ideas, and perspectives. If we are able to get that point across from the beginning, understanding the complexities of true diversity and how to approach those complexities will be a real possibility. The workplace is often where we have the opportunity to experience a greater number of diverse interactions. This makes it a wonderful starting point towards being a top choice for present and future employees.
Resources

http://diversity.ucr.edu/
http://diversity.ucr.edu/about/about.html
http://diversity.ucr.edu/videos/
http://diversity.ucr.edu/about/policies.html
http://diversity.ucr.edu/staff/mei/
http://diversity.ucr.edu/student/programs.html
http://diversity.ucr.edu/faculty/
http://diversity.ucr.edu/faculty/programs.html
http://diversity.ucr.edu/staff/
http://diversity.ucr.edu/staff/mei/alumni/
http://diversity.ucr.edu/complaint/